**Independent Reading Years 7 and 8 - 2014**

**Learning Goals**

The main goal of this crucial programme is to help students become independent readers. This means they have **explicit knowledge of the strategies fluent readers use** and can apply these strategies consistently across the curriculum – not just in English. Another important goal is to help students enjoy reading.

**Texts and Organisation of Texts**

Students can read novels, non-fiction, magazines etc. **They should be able to choose what they read and enjoy the content.** Texts may come from home, the library or from the English Faculty Book Cupboards (two in Mason House and one in the central area of Byrne House). Trustworthy students may also read texts on their phones/kindles etc. **The key for the Byrne House cupboard is on a yellow sports car key ring hanging from a pin on WHI’s orange notice board – please always lock the cupboard after use and return the key.**

Texts can be kept in book boxes. Please use the book box appropriately labelled for your class. Once padlocks arrive the Year 8 book boxes will be kept in the black book box cupboard in the open space in Byrne House. Until that point they should be kept on the floor in the English store room in Byrne House. The shelves above the book boxes are for teachers to keep any materials they wish – a good place to store ongoing displays. I shall label the shelves appropriately.

I realise that many Year 8 classes are not in Byrne House. Once Rhys House is finished we will be able to move some classes back in, but probably not all. You may if you wish use other spaces around the school to store your book box as long as it’s kept in a lockable space. Or you may wish to use reliable students to transport the box back and forth from Byrne House. I trust your professionalism. In Mason House book boxes will be stored as is seen fit.

**Student Responses to Reading**

The Independent Reading Programme is designed to help students have active, meaningful and personal connections to text. Oral discussion, student notes, activities using worksheets and text coding with post it notes as well as a student Reading Response Book will all be used to strengthen and build these connections. Every student in years 7 and 8 has a green Reading Response Book which is most logically stored in the book box. **Our advice is to use the back as a reading log. Rule this into columns headed Title Author Date Page Number.** This simply allows the student to know where they are in the book. **Use the front of the book for reading activities**. This is where the interesting stuff happens. Students will perhaps write a note about a text to self connection they made with their book, or draw a picture of something they visualized. They may make a meaningful prediction or have a question, or be inferring. Intermittent checking of these books is a good idea – only brief comments. Definitely no grades or marks!

**Year 8 teachers should aim to have the Reading Response Book set up and books in book boxes by the end of Week 2 along with class folders of Wantirna College Conference Forms. I would advise storing everything in the book box if possible.**

**Teacher Records**

**Please set up a folder to be kept in the box for ease of access for teacher and parent helper. The folder should have one hard copy per student of the Wantirna College Conference Form which has been emailed to you with this document. Last year I photocopied these for some classes and I’m not doing it again! If you don’t want to store this folder in the box then please keep in the book box cupboard – this makes it easy to find if you are away and a parent volunteer is here.**

**Reading Time**

**English lessons in Years 7 and 8 should immediately start with reading**, thus making us the envy of all other faculties as students silently troop in, sit down and read (yes honestly!). I recommend having plenty of post it notes with you as some students like to text code**. Ten to fifteen minutes of reading** is sufficient and then make sure students have **time to respond to their text in their Reading Response Book**, writing down a question, prediction, inference, or connection (text to self, text to world, text to text), visualisation etc.

**Workshops**

**Ideally one single lesson a week and at least one lesson a fortnight should be devoted entirely to the Independent Reading Programme**. The lesson will begin with a workshop which means the modelling and teaching by the teacher of a particular strategy and then students will practise that strategy in their reading. Teachers can use texts of their own choosing, those suggested by the faculty or the class text.

**Conferences**

**Conferences with students form an essential part of the programme**. In practice these have been very hard to do due to time constraints, which is why I will try my hardest to bring back parent volunteers this year. Please be welcoming of these volunteers and use them. I know sometimes it is annoying, but conferences are essential to build student confidence, to track student use of strategies and generally to celebrate reading. You could try to have conferences during the second half of your workshops or during silent reading time – it depends on the attitude of your class. **Wantirna College Conference** forms should be set up for every student in a folder kept in the book box – please have them done by the end of week 2.

**Strategies including Text Coding and Materials**

A plethora of materials has been disseminated over the last two years and we will send out a document to remind you of what you’ve got and help you use materials well. For the moment I have listed some key strategies and text codes where relevant. **Text coding is the process of tracking thinking about writing using post it notes** e.g. a post it note might have the code P written on it and underneath the comment ‘I think Mrs. White will cosh Mr. Brown with lead piping in the library’. We will be putting up posters of strategies and text codes in the next few weeks.

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| **Strategy** | **Text Code** |
| **Text to self – connecting the text to own personal experience** | **T-S** |
| **Text to text – connecting the text with other texts such as films, other stories, Facebook posts etc.** | **T-T** |
| **Text to world – connecting the text to world events such as historical events, political events etc.** | **T-W** |
| **Questioning – you know!**  **Answer – sometimes readers find the answer to a question and put A and a note** | **?**  **A** |
| **Predicting – you know!** | **P** |
| **Visualisation – reader sees pictures in their mind due to the vividness of the writing. The text code is the picture of an eye – the best I could do is in text code column!** |  |
| Inferring – using Background Knowledge + Textual Clues to read between the lines e.g. we use our knowledge of cold weather (BK) to infer that a shivering character (TC) is cold. | I |
| Really important key piece of information – could be a main idea or theme | \* |
| Something that blows your mind is surprising etc. | ! |
| Interesting or new vocabulary. | V |

If you are new to this I suggest starting with the strategies in bold. You may of course add other codes such as metaphors and similes or foreshadowing – particularly useful if you are using text coding with the set class text. (I think this works a dream by the way – great for differentiation).